

## Community Volunteering

Over the years, either on television, in the newspaper or in your own community, you likely witnessed Hoosiers helping victims of disasters common to Indiana, such as floods or tornadoes. Many of these volunteers are CERT members.

**CERT is a nationwide program that can train you how to respond to emergencies in your community.** When an emergency or disaster occurs, CERT members provide critical support to first responders, assist victims and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site.

CERT groups can form in communities, at businesses and even in schools. In Indiana, there are over 2,000 CERT volunteers and more than 500 certified CERT instructors.

## A Community Taking Action

CERT members receive training that allows them to take immediate and effective action in an emergency.

CERT training sessions cover disaster preparedness, fire suppression, basic medical operations, team operations, and light search and rescue. First responders who complete the CERT Train-the-Trainer course train local CERT volunteers. After completing their training, a CERT volunteer will receive a certificate recognizing their accomplishment.

## A Community Helping Its Citizens

CERT is **not** a replacement for professional first responders. CERT is a program that trains citizens how to aid fellow citizens and first responders during an emergency. For more information to find a CERT near you, visit [www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams](http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams).



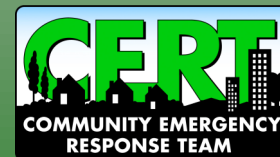
Indiana Government Center South  
302 West Washington Street  
Room E208  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317-232-3980  
[www.in.gov/dhs](http://www.in.gov/dhs)



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## Community Emergency Response Team



Michael R. Pence  
Governor

## How can my community start a program?

Contact your county's local Emergency Management Agency to find out if your county is participating in Citizen Corps. If so, you can request recruitment and training of a CERT team or ask to join an existing CERT team.

A signed agreement between the Indiana Department of Homeland Security and the county's Emergency Management Agency is required to receive grant funding for a local CERT program.

If your county is not currently a Citizen Corps participant, contact your county Emergency Management Agency. The county can contact IDHS to learn how to bring this beneficial response program to your area.



## How do I become a CERT team member?

Contact your county's local Emergency Management Agency to complete an application and learn more about joining a CERT team in your area. In some circumstances, a local background check is required.

After the appropriate paperwork is completed, you must participate in the required CERT volunteer training to build appropriate competencies and skills. After completing training, you may receive an assignment to a CERT team near you.



## Can anyone be a CERT team member?

There is a job for almost everyone in CERT. Some strenuous tasks may limit an individual's ability to assist, however, these individuals can assist by calming and tending to victims or completing necessary documentation.

Some counties in Indiana currently have a Teen (high school) CERT program. CERT volunteers under the age of 18 operate under a limited scope of work. These members can serve as beneficial assistance at an emergency scene while having limited exposure to danger.

CERT members 18 and older may participate in all CERT functions.

## How long does CERT training last?

Indiana CERT uses the FEMA training program, which requires at least 24 hours of training. A county may provide further training, which would require additional time. Training schedules are determined locally, and may vary from county to county.

## What does CERT training include?

CERT students receive the following training:

- An introduction to CERT;
- Organization of CERT and CERT operations;
- Medical operations, including triage, treatment and first aid;
- Fire safety and light search and rescue;

- CERT role in a terrorist incident;
  - Introduction to disaster psychology to prepare to help victims cope with the situation.
- CERT students then participate in a realistic and challenging emergency exercise, in which they use the knowledge and skills they have learned.

CERT teams may receive periodic refresher training and participate in emergency exercises in their county.

## How many people are in a CERT team?

The recommended number of trained volunteers per team is ten (10).

## Can an Indiana CERT be called upon for use in another state if there is a national emergency?

Yes. Indiana CERT volunteers may serve in communities other than their own. Indiana CERT volunteers have traveled to the Gulf Coast to assist residents after devastating hurricanes.



## For More Information

For more information on these programs contact your local emergency management agency (EMA). For more information on IDHS, visit our website at: [www.in.gov/dhs/citizen corps.htm](http://www.in.gov/dhs/citizen corps.htm).